

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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FOR NEA

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINS, PINT, LYS, US
SUBJ: US-LIBYAN RELATIONS

REF: (A) 76 TRIPOLI 1504 AND PREVIOUS (B) TRIPOLI 0264

1. AS DEPT AWARE, I HAVE OVER PAST 15 MONTHS ADVOCATED DISCUSSING OUR PROBLEMS AND EXPLORING OUR RELATIONS WITH THE LIBYANS AS A POTENTIALLY IMPORTANT STEP PRIOR TO ADOPTING OTHER MEASURES WHICH COULD SERIOUSLY DAMFGE OUR INTERESTS HERE. I WAS THUS INTERESTED TO READ DEPT SPOKESMAN'S STATEMENT, CARRIED IN JUNE 13 WIRELESS FILE, THAT "THE FIRST THING THAT IS REQUIRED FOR IMPROVING RELATIONS WITH LIBYA IS THAT WE HAVE A SERIOUS CONVERSATION WITH THE LIBYANS ABOUT THAT GOVERNMENT'S SUPPORT FOR INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM AND THE NEED FOR PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST." SPOKESMAN IS QUOTED AS SAYING "THOSE ARE TWO MAJOR ITEMS THAT WE FEEL MUST BE ADDRESSED BEFORE THE RESTORATION OF REPRESENTATION AT THE AMBASSADORIAL LEVEL CAN BE CONSIDERED."

2. IF WE ARE TO HOLD THESE CONVERSATIONS WITH THE LIBYANS, I BELIEVE WE SHOULD RETAIN THE OPTION OF
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CONDUCTING THEM AT A HIGHER LEVEL EITHER HERE OR IN WASHINGTON, ALTHOUGH AN INITIAL ROUND WOULD PROBABLY BE WITH THE FOREIGN SECRETARIAT IN TRIPOLI. IF THE LIBYANS ARE FORTHCOMING, WE MIGHT THEN CONSIDER ACCEPTANCE OF A LIBYAN AMBASSADOR TO WASHINGTON -- PROVIDED, OF COURSE, THAT SUCH A MOVE WOULD NOT UNDULY COMPLICATE OUR MORE IMPORTANT TIES TO SADAT. I

RECOGNIZE THAT SENDING AN AMERICAN AMBASSADOR TO TRIPOLI OR OTHER RECIPROCAL MOVES WOULD NECESSARILY DEPEND UPON MORE CONCRETE POSITIVE DEVELOPMENTS IN OUR RELATIONS.

3. AS FOR MANY OF THE OTHER OPTIONS IN DEALING WITH THE DISRUPTIVE ACTIVITIES OF THIS TROUBLESOME GOVERNMENT (WE DISCUSSED THE DEPT'S OPTIONS PAPER WITH PADEFORD DURING HIS RECENT VISIT) I HAVE RESERVATIONS OVER THEIR REAL EFFECTIVENESS IN ACHIEVING OUR OBJECTIVES WHILE PROTECTING OUR CONSIDERABLE INTERESTS HERE. INEFFECTIVE MEASURES WILL ONLY PRODUCE MORE IRRITANTS AND COULD BODE ILL FOR US INTERESTS IN LIBYA AND THIS REGION BY INVITING RETALIATION.

4. THE LIBYAN ARE ALREADY AWARE THAT THEY CANNOT GET US WEAPONRY, AND WE SHOULD CONTINUE TO DENY THESE EXPORTS AND URGE OUR ALLIES TO DO SO AS WELL. BUT A FINAL TURN DOWN OF C-130 DELIVERES OR DISAPPROVAL LOCKHEED REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE CONTRACTS WOULD PROBABLY ELIMINATE ANY POSSIBILITIES DEALING FURTHER WITH THE LIBYANS THROUGH DISCUSSION OF OUR PROBLEMS, AND MAY INVITE RETALIATION. APPROVAL OF L-100 EXPORTS IS DIFFICULT PROBLEM IN THAT THESE AIRCRAFT COULD MARGINALLY ADD TO LIBYA'S DISRUPTIVE CAPABILITY EVEN THOUGH LIBYA HAS A CLEAR REQUIREMENT FOR COMMERCIAL SECRET

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CARGO AIRCRAFT, AND DELIVERY L-100'S COULD BE MEANS TO DISPOSE OF C-130 ISSUE. BUT PLACING GENERAL LICENSE ITEMS UNDER VALIDATED LICENSE CONTROL AND EXPANDING LIST OF DISAPPROVED VALIDATED LICENSE EXPORTS, IT SEEMS TO ME, PENALIZES US LABOR, INDUSTRY AND BALANCE OF PAYMENTS WHILE HAVING LITTLE OR NO REAL IMPACT ON LIBYAN MILITARY OR DISRUPTIVE CAPABILITIES.

5. I THINK WE SHOULD BEAR IN MIND THAT QADHAFI CANNOT EXPECT TO REPRESENT A SUBSTANTIAL MILITARY FORCE IN THIS REGION. HE CLEARLY CONSIDERS IMPORTANT ELEMENTS OF HIS ARMED FORCES TO BE UNRELIABLE, AND IT IS HARD TO SEE ANY SOLUTION TO THE CONSTRAINTS IMPOSED BY LIBYAN MANPOWER SHORTAGES. RATHER, HE SEEKS ARMS FOR POLITICAL EFFECT. HE BELIEVES A LARGE ARMORY GIVES HIM LEVERAGE AND AMPLIFIES LIBYA'S VOICE IN THE REGION AND IN THE THIRD WORLD. HIS DETERMINATION AND MEGALOMANIA LEADS HIM TO HIS DISRUPTIVE ACTIVITIES, AND HIS OIL INCOME PROVIDES THE MEANS.

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